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NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Table Tennis
England

Copper Box Arena,
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
March 1-4, 2018

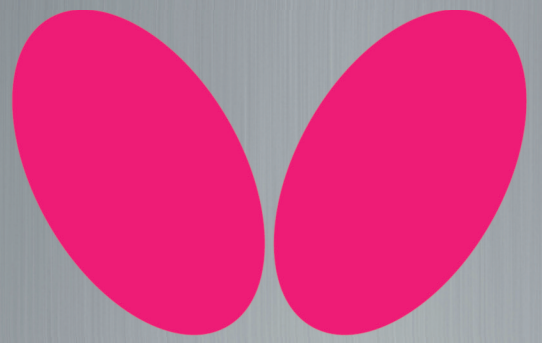


#PGMutualNationals

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Programme: £1

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Tomokatu Harimoto

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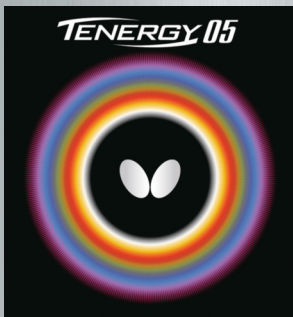
Liam Pitchford

3x English Champion



Timo Boll

6x European Champion



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Sandra Deaton
Chairman, Table Tennis England

I am delighted to welcome you to the Copper Box Arena for England's PG Mutual National Championships

For the past week, this world class venue has been the centre of excellence for international table tennis as we were proud to play host to some of the best players in the world for the thrilling Team World Cup; then we watched and cheered our own internationals in their quest for European Championship success; and now we are delighted that it has opened its door to our own annual senior national championships.

Hosting the event at the Copper Box Arena after the Team World Cup allows us to improve the experience for players and spectators with a new schedule and presentation.

I want to congratulate all our players who are competing here over the next few days. We have some of our elite athletes, including Olympians, Paralympians and Commonwealth champions; and they will be challenged and pressed by our rising stars.

It promises to be a first-rate championships and one which we are proud to showcase to a wider audience through live coverage on the BBC website. We hope this not only demonstrates the immense skill and talent of our players, but will also encourage others to take up the sport and enjoy it at

It promises to
be a first-rate
championships
which we
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through live
coverage on
the BBC

whatever level they can achieve.

We are fortunate that not only do we have players who can compete on equal terms on a world stage, but they are ambassadors for our sport and I thank them for the inspiration they give others, and the example they set both on and off the courts.

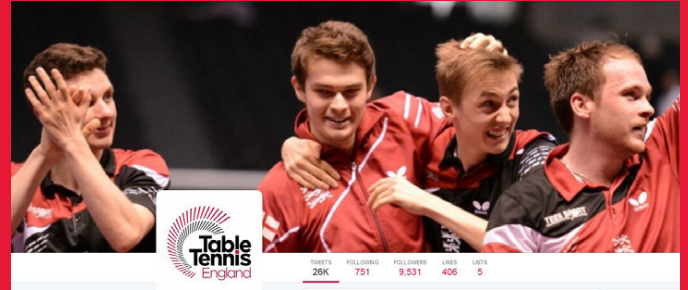
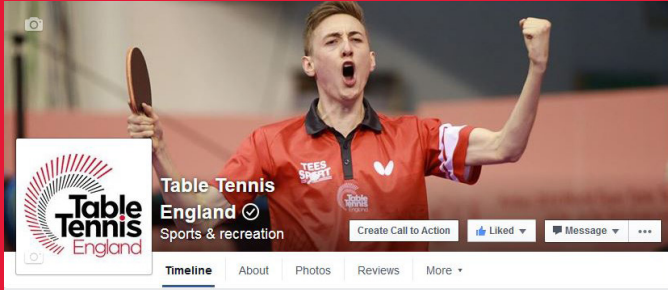
These events do not happen without hard work and the dedication of many people. I would like to thank and pay tribute to all our valued volunteers who turn out - not just at events such as this - but week in and week out in the clubs, leagues, counties and regions throughout the country.

One of our events during this weekend is to present the Pride of Table Tennis Awards to some of those volunteers. I congratulate the individual winners, but also acknowledge that their contribution is being recognised as part of the much wider family of volunteers.

I would also like to thank the staff at Table Tennis England; our officials; our sponsors, particularly Mike Perry from PG Mutual for his ongoing support of this event; and our players, coaches, and supporters.

I wish all our players good luck and that they play to the best of their ability with determination, enthusiasm and good sportsmanship. I hope everyone enjoys the weekend and encourages renewed enthusiasm for the sport.

Follow us on our social media sites

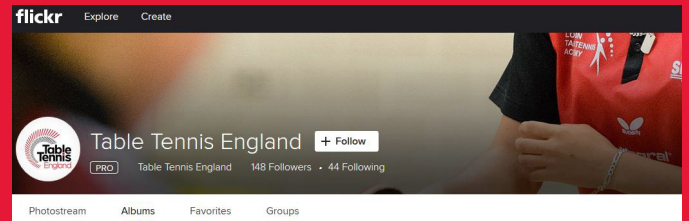
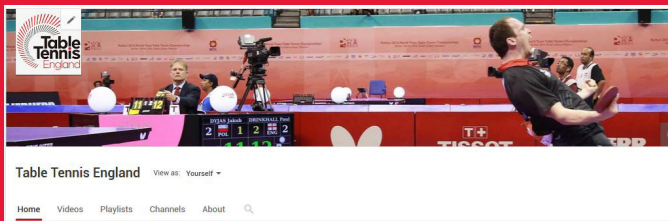


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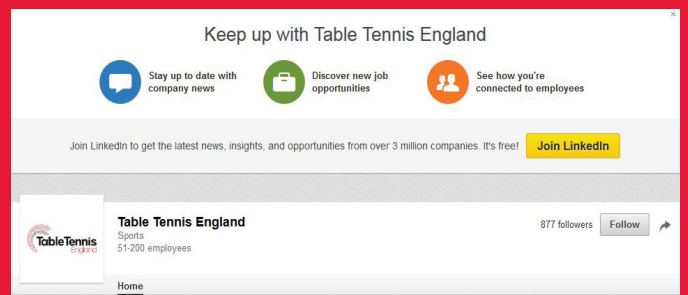
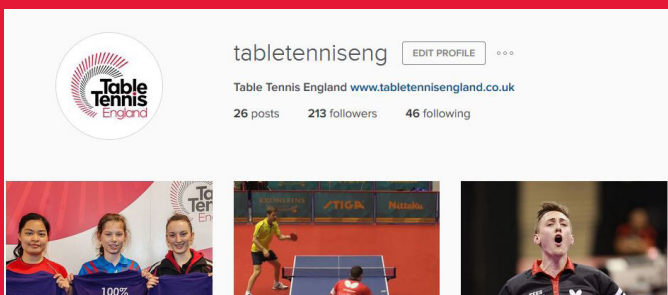


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Mike Perry
CEO, PG Mutual

On behalf of PG Mutual, welcome to the third PG Mutual National Table Tennis Championships held this year at such a prestigious venue which recently witnessed some of the best table tennis ever seen in the UK at the World Team Cup.

Sport played at the highest level has always had the ability to inspire and by visiting the Nationals, whatever your age, you may want to set challenging goals to improve your standard of play.

If you are visiting as a non-player make sure you visit the fanzone, pick up a bat and have a go.

Table Tennis is great fun and can be enjoyed by the whole family, making it

a sport for life. The PG Mutual Income Protection Plus is designed to look after families when an income is lost due to accident or illness. Visit our website at pgmutual.co.uk for full details.

Thank you to everyone at Table Tennis England, the players, the coaches and to the volunteers who make the PG Mutual National Championships a success.

I would like to give a special mention to the parents of the players taking part and those sitting in the audience who give so much to encourage their children to take part in table tennis.

Those dark nights driving back and forth in all weathers means the sport has a bright future.



Patron

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Referee: Steve Smith

Assistant referee: Shawn Haskell

Umpire Manager: Karen Tonge MBE

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Technical Operations Manager: Chris Newton

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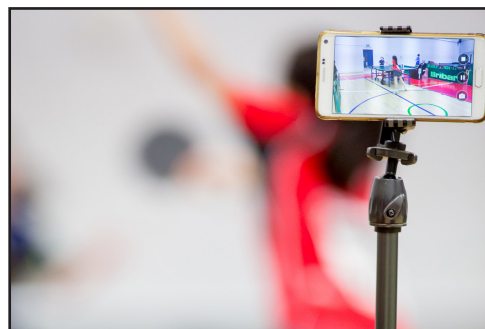
Photography and filming

By purchasing a ticket, all spectators have agreed that they may appear in event photographs and/or TV broadcasting. Should anyone feel uncomfortable about this, or wish to report any concerns, please speak to your nearest volunteer or staff member.

Please note, flash photography is prohibited.

Live streaming of this event on social media is strictly prohibited.

Anyone found doing so may be asked to leave the venue.



Thursday March 1 – Under-21s

1pm	Men's Singles and Women's Singles group matches (1/3)
2.45pm	Group matches (2/3)
4.30pm	Group matches (3/3)
6.30pm	Quarter-finals
7.45pm	Semi-finals
8.30pm	Finals, followed by presentations

Friday March 2

10am	Men's Singles and Women's Singles group matches (1/3)
Noon	Group matches (2/3)
2pm	Group matches (3/3)
4.15pm	Men's Doubles and Women's Doubles first round
6.15pm	Mixed Doubles first round
7.15pm	Mixed Doubles quarter-finals

Saturday March 3

10am	Para events
10.30am	Men's Singles and Women's Singles first round
2pm	Mixed Doubles semi-finals
2.30pm	Men's Doubles and Women's Doubles quarter-finals
4.45pm	Men's Singles and Women's Singles quarter-finals
8pm	Men's Doubles and Women's Doubles semi-finals

Sunday March 4

10am	Women's Singles semi-final 1
10.45am	Men's Singles semi-final 1
11.30am	Women's Singles semi-final 2
12.15pm	Men's Singles semi-final 2
1pm	Mixed Doubles final, followed by presentation
1.45pm	Women's Doubles final, followed by presentation
2.45pm	Men's Doubles final, followed by presentation
3.30pm	Women's Singles final, followed by presentation
4.30pm	Men's Singles final, followed by presentation

The players

MS

Men's Singles



Paul Drinkhall
Aged 28, from Loftus
Seeded: 1



Liam Pitchford
24, Chesterfield
Seeded: 2



Sam Walker
22, Worksop
Seeded: 3



Tom Jarvis
18, Skegness
Seeded: 4



Chris Doran
26, Cogenhoe
Seeded: 5



David McBeath
25, Southampton
Seeded: 6



Danny Reed
28, Hutton Rudby
Seeded: 7



Helshan Weerasinghe
20, Tonbridge
Seeded: 8

Michael O'Driscoll
Craig Bryant
Josh Bennett
Luke Savill
Matt Leete
Adam Harrison
Sam Mabey
James Hobson
Gabriel Achampong
Jack Bennett
Victor Guang Shi

Dominic Sussex
Alim Hirji
Liam McTiernan
Shayan Siraj
Stephen Beerling
Shaquille Webb-Dixon
Mitchell Jones
Mohammed Emran Hussain
*Joe Clark
*Ethan Walsh
**denotes wildcard*

U21 M

Under-21 Men

Tom Jarvis
Helshan Weerasinghe
Josh Bennett
Luke Savill
Matt Leete
Sam Mabey
James Hobson
Gabriel Achampong

Jack Bennett
Shayan Siraj
Shaquille Webb-Dixon
Mitchell Jones
Adam Jepson
*Joe Clark
*Ethan Walsh
**denotes wildcard*

The players

W S

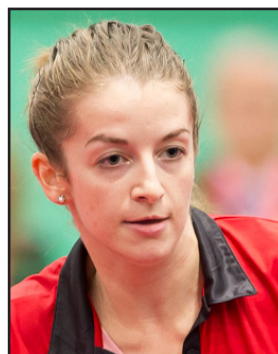
Women's Singles



Tin-Tin Ho
19, Paddington
Seeded: 1



Kelly Sibley
29, Leamington
Seeded: 2



Karina Le Fevre
24, Stockton-on-Tees
Seeded: 3



Maria Tsapsinos
20, Reading
Seeded: 4



Hannah Hicks
26, Leckford
Seeded: 5



Emily Bolton
20, Askam-in-Furness
Seeded: 6



Yolanda King
23, Hastings
Seeded: 7



Mollie Patterson
15, King's Lynn
Seeded: 8

Denise Payet
Charlotte Bardsley
Evie Collier
Kate Hughes
Bethany Farnworth
Kate Cheer
Sarah Horsnell

Sally Hughes
Tiana Dennison
Bhavika Mistry
Sarah Menghistab
*Emma Torkington
*Megan Gidney
**denotes wildcard*

U 21 W

Under-21 Women

Tin-Tin Ho
Maria Tsapsinos
Emily Bolton
Mollie Patterson
Denise Payet
Charlotte Bardsley
Bethany Farnworth
Kate Cheer

Tiana Dennison
Bhavika Mistry
Sarah Menghistab
Danielle Kelly
Amelia Chan
*Megan Gidney
**denotes wildcard*

The players

M

Liam Pitchford & Sam Walker
Christopher Doran & Tom Jarvis
David McBeath & Paul Drinkhall
Michael O'Driscoll & Craig Bryant
Matthew Leete & Luke Savill
James Hobson & Victor Guang Shi
Gabriel Achampong & Liam McTiernan
Jack Bennett & Josh Bennett
Alim Hirji & Adam Harrison
Mitchell Jones & Shaquille Webb-Dixon
Joe Clark & Shayan Siraj

D

Men's
Doubles

W

Tin-Tin Ho & Denise Payet
Kelly Sibley & Maria Tsaptsinos
Emily Bolton & Mollie Patterson
Kate Hughes & Evie Collier
Kate Cheer & Emma Torkington
Megan Gidney & Charlotte Bardsley
Sarah Horsnell & Sally Hughes

D

Women's
Doubles

X

Tin-Tin Ho & Liam Pitchford
Kelly Sibley & David McBeath
Maria Tsaptsinos & Tom Jarvis
Hannah Hicks & Chris Doran
Emily Bolton & Matt Leete
Mollie Patterson & Joe Clark
Denise Payet & Sam Walker
Evie Collier & James Hobson
Kate Hughes & Michael O'Driscoll
Kate Cheer & Josh Bennett
Emma Torkington & Craig Bryant
Megan Gidney & Ethan Walsh

D

Mixed
Doubles

P
a
r
a

Mixed Classes 3-5



Jack Hunter-Spivey
Aged 22
From Liverpool



Dan Bullen
20
St Neots

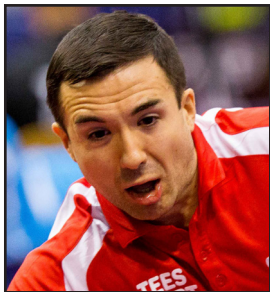


Megan Shackleton
18
Todmorden



Lucie Bouron
22
Bracknell

Men's Standing Classes 7-10



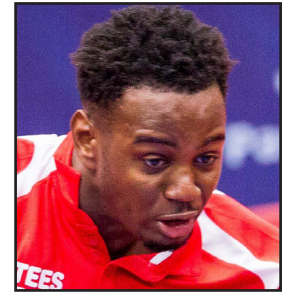
Will Bayley
30
Tunbridge Wells



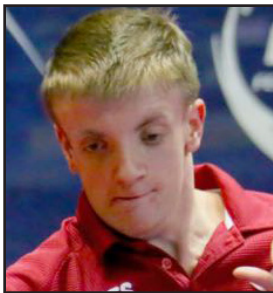
Aaron McKibbin
26
Wandsworth



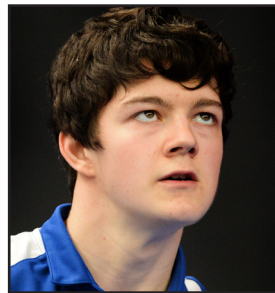
Ross Wilson
22
Minster



**Ashley Facey
Thompson**
23
Leytonstone



Craig Allen
23
Bromsgrove



Alex Bland
18
Rotherham

A note on classifications

Classes 1-5 are for physical impairment (sitting), class 1 being the most severely affected and class 5 having the most physical functionality.

Classes 6-10 are for physical impairment (standing), class 6 being the most severe and class 10 the least. These are set by the International Paralympic Committee.

As 11 table tennis athletes prepare to represent Team England at Gold Coast 2018 next month, they talk to us about:

Our
Common
Cause



Team England

Kim Daybell
Paul Drinkhall
Tin-Tin Ho
David McBeath
Denise Payet
Felicity Pickard
Liam Pitchford
Kelly Sibley
Maria Tsaptsinos
Sam Walker
Ross Wilson

Coaching staff: Alan Cooke, Marcus Sjoberg,
Marcus Gustafson, Shaun Marples.
Coaching Intern: Evie Collier

Tin-Tin Ho

"I'm really excited, especially as it's in Australia. It's my second Commonwealths and the last one was a really good experience. It was my first big multi-sports event, so I know what to expect this time.

"I remember Glasgow really well. I was the youngest player and felt I had no pressure and went out and enjoyed it."

"In the team event, I think it will be quite hard but I think we can win a medal. India and Singapore will be good, and Malaysia and Canada.

"My goal is to get an individual medal too but I know that will be really tough. It's something I can work towards and see what happens."

Denise Payet

"It's amazing, I'm really excited for the experience and really happy that I get to be in the team and hopefully learn a lot from the experience.

"It's a huge event and will be something totally new which I'm looking forward to. I've seen it on TV before but to actually be there is mind-blowing.

"Hopefully we can get a medal and I can be part of that. I think we've had a chance as a team, all the girls work hard and I'm really happy I can be with them – I idolised them when I was younger.

"They all look after me and make me welcome like a family, I don't feel left out at all. Having them be so welcoming is great, and comforting."

Kelly Sibley

"To be selected for any major Games is always exciting and I'm always really proud to represent England.

"My first Commonwealths were in Australia in 2006 and to compete there again is really exciting."

"In the team event, our main goal is to get a medal, and I think we will be there or thereabouts. If we can come together as a team and play well, we can get that medal.

"I remember finishing fourth in Delhi in 2010 and I lost the deciding match against Malaysia 12-10 in the fifth set. It was one of the worst feelings I've ever had and probably the worst in my career.

"But I used it to spur myself on and in Glasgow Danny and me played fantastically to win that bronze.

"I've got good memories from Glasgow and it's still fresh in the mind even though it's four years ago. We can use what we achieved then and hopefully push on."

Maria Tsaptsinos

"I'm very happy with my selection and feeling



good. We've got a good team heading out there and good preparation coming up.

"I feel confident that we can go out and get some medals and show people what we are made of."

"As a geographer it will be nice to see the landscape in Australia and I want to see how the people live. It will be a cool place to go, but we're not there on holiday – we see ourselves as definitely in the mix for medals.

"In the team, I think Singapore will be the main threat. India are also tough competitors, but Singapore have got another level.

"I think we can also get some medals in the doubles. We don't know who we'll be playing with yet, but all our combinations are good."

Marcus Gustafson (coach)

In Sweden, the Commonwealth Games is not a big thing and hardly gets reported in the media, but I've been involved before when I coached South Africa men in 2010 in Delhi, so I realise how big it really is and the importance to the athletes and everyone else involved. It's great to be part of it again.

Our ambition for the girls is of course to win a medal in the team, that's the main objective. It will be a difficult task but it's absolutely possible if we have a good tournament.

I've been with the team at a few tournaments now, including the Europeans in Luxembourg, and it's a good atmosphere in the team, both on the bench and on the table and also off the table.

For me, it's been a privilege to be a part of it so far.

Liam on a Gold Coast gold quest



Liam Pitchford made history at Glasgow 2014 when he became the first English player to win a singles medal at a Commonwealth Games

His 4-2 victory in the bronze medal play-off against India's Sharath Kamal Achanta not only put him on the podium, it was also his fifth Commonwealths medal.

Team silver and men's doubles bronze from Delhi in 2010, plus team and mixed doubles silver from Glasgow, left Pitchford one medal behind England's table tennis record-holder, Andrew Baggaley.

He heads to Gold Coast next month with more medals in mind, an upgrade to team silver and singles bronze being the main ambitions.

"We go to the Commonwealth Games with expectations," said the 24-year-old from Chesterfield.

"In the team, we've got to aim for gold – twice in a row, we've come second. I think (Glasgow gold medallists) Singapore are a bit weaker now than four years ago. You never know with Nigeria, if (World No 22) Quadri Aruna plays well.

"I think us and India start off as favourites. We beat them at the last two Commonwealth Games and they won't be looking forward to playing us.

"We've definitely got a strong team. We're all really good friends off the table and we're always there working for each other and will bring that to the table in Australia. We've had success together and we've had bad times as well, so we're ready for anything."

In the singles, Aruna is certain to be a major threat, but Pitchford is also expecting England team-mates Paul Drinkhall and Sam Walker to challenge.

"In the singles, I want to gold medal and anything less than that, I would be disappointed," he said.

"Everyone there can play, but definitely Paul and Sam will be going in wanting that gold as well.

"Paul will probably go in as one of the top seeds and one of the favourites. If we play each other, there will be no love lost on the table but afterwards we'll say 'well done' and that's it."

An England 1-2-3, while a tall order, may not be beyond the realms of possibility and it would repeat the mixed doubles feat from Glasgow when Paul & Jo Drinkhall won gold ahead of Pitchford & Tin-Tin Ho,

We've definitely got a strong team. We're all really good friends off the table and we're always there working for each other

with Kelly Sibley & Danny Reed in bronze.

"The mixed doubles wasn't at the forefront of my mind, if I'm honest," said Pitchford. "We knew we could do well, but no one will say we expected a full England podium.

"Me and Tin-Tin just clicked and played really well and without fear. In the final, we had chances but probably a bit of experience was key for Paul and Jo."

So what are Pitchford's other memories from Glasgow?

"We prepared really well as a team. We had a physical coach with us for a lot of the time and I felt like I was physically in my best shape," he said.

"I knew it was going to be a long tournament but I played to a decent standard I'd be progressing further and further. I knew physically no one could match me and that gave me a lot of confidence.

"Team-wise, we expected to get a medal. The semi-final against India was closer than it should have been. It was good to win two matches in that one and help the team into the final. The final itself slipped away a bit. It was a bit disappointing, but silver is never bad.

"The singles, I had a pretty good draw but the last day was really tough. I led 3-2 against Gao Ning in the semi-final and ended up losing 4-3 so I had to play for bronze in my last match of the tournament.

"It wasn't the best quality match, I think both of us were nervous. To get over the finishing line and to be England's first Commonwealth singles medallist was a relief. I felt it was what I came for."

Will Pitchford and England be able to say something similar after Gold Coast 2018?

PAUL STIMPSON

Medal moment: Liam Pitchford celebrates singles bronze at Glasgow 2014



Sam Walker

"My ambitions are lots of medals, hopefully! For the team, I think gold has to be the ambition, but I'd like gold in everything – that's what I'm aiming for."

"I think I'll probably be in the top eight seeds and first things first is to get to the quarter-finals. I believe I'd be able to go on and win it, but there's a lot of others thinking the same thing and trying to do it."

"We're friends off the table but obviously if we meet on the table, well, you just have to play your opponent as normal."

"I want my friends to do well. I'll try my best but if I play them and lose to them fairly because they are the better player, then that's fine, I'll be happy for them."

"I would like for it to be an England 1-2-3 – that would be amazing!"



David McBeath

"I'm buzzing and it's my first time in Australia as well, so I'm looking forward to that."

"It's been high up in my ambitions to compete at a Commonwealths, to be part of the team and contribute what I can."

"I think we've got a very good chance in the team event. The guys have proved with the World Championships bronze that they can compete with anyone. I definitely think we can win gold."

"We've got a good team spirit, we are all friends outside table tennis and get on well together. We've been around each other for quite a while in the England team or playing abroad and I've grown up with the others and played together in the cadets and juniors."



Paul Drinkhall

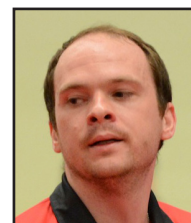
"We want to win the team. That's the first event and the first priority. "For me and Liam, we missed out last time on a men's doubles medal, so we're hoping to get into the medals this time, and there's no reason we can't."

"For us, we've got the experience even though we're a young team, and we're up there with the favourites. We'll be there or thereabouts."

"In the singles it's very similar, I'm looking to get to the medal matches. When you get into that position, anyone can win. It's just about giving yourself the best chance to have a go at it."

"I think there's a lot of players who can win it and no out-and-out favourite. It will be an interesting tournament. It's good to be in that group and hopefully I will come out on top."

"There's a lot of good players and the person who does win it is going to deserve it."



Marcus Sjoberg (coach)

"I was with the players at the Europeans and we've had a lot of camps together, so I've known them for a long time."

"At the Commonwealths, we are one of the favourites of course, maybe us and India."

"The boys have performed well in important team events before, at the Olympics and Worlds, and will go for a gold medal."

"My feeling is the team really like these big tournaments and go in with a very good feeling and are good at these type of tournaments."





Evie part of coaching programme

Evie Collier has been awarded a unique opportunity to help Team England as they get on the medal trail at the Commonwealth Games.

Collier, who hails from Brentwood, has been awarded a prestigious place on the inaugural Women's Coach Internship Programme (WCIP) to be piloted at the Gold Coast games.

There were only 19 places on the programme available across all the Commonwealth countries and across all the sports, so to secure one of these places was a great achievement. The 23-year-old will work with the England squad, who are expected to be among the favourites for medals.

Collier is also a talented player ranked just outside the top 10 in the England national rankings. She has previous experience of a multi-sport event, having competed at the World University Games in South Korea in 2015, while a student at Nottingham Trent. She said: "I'm excited. It's getting real now. I wasn't expecting this opportunity a few months ago and I'm really grateful for the initiative to promote female coaches in sport.

"I'm going to be shadowing Marcus Gustafson and Alan Cooke (coaches) and developing my own experience as a coach at a big multi-sport event.

"Just being out there is an experience in itself, so I'm going to take as much as I can from it.

"Still being a player, it's going to help me with that as well. Going back to the Commonwealths as a player would be the cherry on top and beyond that as a coach, who knows?"

"I do a bit of work already with the England Youth Squad, so developing that would be fantastic."

Ross has the willpower to mount a challenge

London and Rio Paralympic medallist Ross Wilson believes that overcoming challenges is part of your DNA if you are a Para athlete but the reigning national champion has had to deal with more setbacks than most since winning team bronze in London 2012 as a 17-year-old.

A talented junior player until being diagnosed with multiple epiphyseal dysplasia, which affects the growing ends of the bones, he was ranked No 2 in the world in men's class 8 at the end of 2012 but then had to contend with a series of injuries that kept him out of competition for two years and hampered his preparation for the European Championships in 2015 and the Paralympic Games in 2016.

Nevertheless, he returned from Rio with a bronze medal from the men's class 6-8 team event.

"Injuries are part of being an athlete," he acknowledged, "and you have to learn how to deal with them mentally as well as physically.

"I don't find them too frustrating any more to be honest because I've worked out with my coaches the best way to combat my injuries now. When you get an injury it makes you more determined when you do get back because it makes you want it more."

This year Wilson is focused on the World Championships in Slovenia in October but before that he will compete for Team England at the Commonwealth Games in Australia.

"To be selected for the Commonwealth Games is incredible," he said. "It is something





I watched on TV when I was younger and something I've always wanted to compete in so I'm very proud.

"It is an honour to compete for my country – normally I'm competing for GB but this time it will be for England and I'm really looking forward to getting out there with the rest of the team."

Wilson's strongest opposition on the Gold Coast could well come from one of his GB team-mates, fellow Englishman Kim Daybell and Josh Stacey, who will represent Wales.

"Healthy competition is good," said Wilson. "If I have to play one of my team-mates then I'll just take it the same as any other match, do my best and focus on the matter in hand."

Wilson spent several weeks last year travelling around Australia including the Gold Coast and admits that it is his favourite country – after England.

"I loved the country and the people," he said, "and I'm looking forward to seeing how they host such a major event. The weather was a different level – really hot. It's a great place for the Games and I think it will be amazing."

Having taken bronze in singles and team events at the European Championships in 2017, losing a close match 3-2 to the Ukrainian World No 1 Viktor Didukh in the semi-finals of the men's class 8 singles, Wilson is also looking to challenge for medals at what will be his first World Championships later this year.

"I think I'm competing with the top three guys in the world now," he said, "and I just want to keep improving and come back even stronger. It's exciting to have two major competitions in one year and I can't wait to get out there and hopefully bring back medals from both."

FRANCESCA BULLOCK

Kim Daybell

"I'm really excited. It's the first time para has had a real contingent going and the first time they've had a standing event.

"To be part of the first one is going to be very exciting and to go to Australia will be a good trip.

"We've played big multi-sport events before – the Paralympics – but it's still quite rare to get the chance to do that.

"We are representing England rather than GB and it will be interesting to see if it has a different feel to it. We could play against our colleagues from Scotland or Wales, who we've never had to play against before.

"It will be nice to stand side by side with the able-bodied players and get the same coverage and the same recognition. I'm really looking forward to it."



Fliess Pickard

"It's an exciting prospect, I've never really been to something big like this before, especially a multi-sport event.

"The experience will be great to take into the future.

"I'll just try to play my best and if I play the table tennis I can play, then anything is possible. To get a medal would be fantastic, but I'll just take it one match at a time.

"It feels a bit different being England rather than GB, but we have the same pride.

"It's a great chance to be part of a whole team. It shows we are now getting the recognition the same as the able-bodied athletes and I think that's good.

"I follow quite a lot of the other sports and I'm always interested in how other athletes are doing and learning from them, because they all have different perspectives.

"I just want to test myself and challenge myself and enjoy it."



Shaun Marples (coach)

"I'm very excited, it's a great opportunity for me to work with the team and to coach Ross, Kim and Fliess in a major competition. I'm privileged to be part of Team England going out there.

"This will be my first major competition working in an official capacity. I went to Rio to watch as a spectator and that was just fantastic, witnessing Will (Bayley) and Rob (Davies) win their golds, and the team (Bayley, Wilson and Aaron McKibbin) win their bronze in the team. I feel excited to be in that environment again.

"I went as a player to the World University Games in Thailand in 2007 and when you're mixing with multiple sports and being in a team environment, it's an exciting thing to be part of.

"The guys that are going have good experience of playing major competitions, so we'll work with them and set goals and what we want each player to achieve. We'll have team and individual goals, but it also all accumulates for Team England."





Tom aims to take it to the next level

As Junior careers go, Tom Jarvis can be pretty happy with his achievements – but there is no resting on his laurels as he makes his way in the Senior ranks.

The Skegness player turned 18 in December, bowing out of the under-18s at the World Junior Championships in Italy.

He ‘celebrated’ the big day by playing third seed Niu Guanki of China in the last 32, though he was unable to give himself the perfect present as he was knocked out by an opponent who went on to reach the semi-finals.

Nonetheless, Jarvis takes forward a CV which saw him clean up in domestic competitions and enjoy some notable achievements on the international stage, including becoming Spanish Cadet Open champion in 2014.

“I’ve had quite a good Junior career,” he reflects. “I think a big moment for me was when I won the Spanish. That gave me

confidence and made me realise I can do something in table tennis internationally, and it gave me the confidence to work harder.

“I moved into the Juniors and always the goal was a medal at the Junior Europeans . . . I came close (losing in the quarter-finals to No 1 seed Cristian Pletea in 2017). I wouldn’t say I had any regrets because I did everything I could to give myself a chance to medal. I’m reasonably happy with the last year.”

One thing Jarvis might be forgiven for feeling unhappy about was having to pull out through illness on the eve of the Europe Youth Top 10 in Worcester in September.

That he was able to bury his disappointment, posting a positive message on social media and visiting the venue to wish everyone well on the morning of the tournament, before heading for a medical appointment, speaks volumes about his character.

“I was absolutely gutted but I wasn’t fit to play, so it was the right decision at





Eye on the ball: Tom Jarvis plans to keep working hard to improve as he leaves behind a Junior career which included the Spanish Cadet Open title (far left)

There's not one thing I'm working towards, I just want to be the best I can be

the time," he said. "You just have to take it as it is and try to use it to help me, which I did. One tournament isn't the end of the world – hopefully I've got hundreds more ahead of me."

For the past 18 months, Jarvis has been based at Halmstad BTK in Sweden, moving there after attending the Rio Olympics, where he was Team GB reserve.

Returning to the Olympic stage as a player is an ambition, but Jarvis remains focused on the work ahead of him, rather than the outcomes.

He said: "There's not one thing I'm working towards, I just want to be the best I can be. I want to play singles at the Olympics and try to make as many good results as possible wearing an England shirt."

"Rio was a massive changing point in my life and made me see what I could get if I kept going. I know I wasn't a player but it made me see what I could achieve if I kept on that path and worked hard.

"I learned a lot from the time there, which

helped me make the transition to moving to Sweden as well.

"I moved to Sweden for the standard of training. Everyone is wanting to be a good professional table tennis player and the standard of people I'm trying to beat, I need to be training at that standard. I can't get that in England."

Jarvis also benefits from training alongside Liam Pitchford, who is based in Halmstad, and he added: "I've been with Pitch training this past year and he's my main influence in the England team.

"I've spent a lot of time with him, learning the things he does and if I need help, he always helps."

Here in London, Jarvis will be aiming to take the Under-21 National title for the third successive year and will then fly to Minsk for the European Under-21s which start on March 8.

It surely won't be long before he's extending that CV.

PAUL STIMPSON



As well as crowning our national champions here in London this weekend, we are also honouring our sport's unsung heroes and volunteers at the Pride of Table Tennis Awards presentation dinner.

Pride of Table Tennis is our annual celebration of those who give up their time to help people play table tennis, and who impact positively on people's lives.

A total of 69 volunteers have already been honoured at local level this year and 37 received regional awards.

The national winners will be revealed at the dinner at The Grange Tower Hotel, London, on Saturday 3rd March, during the PG Mutual National Championships.

Greg Yarnall, Head of Development and Volunteering at Table Tennis England, was part of the national judging panel and said: "This year, the standard of applications have been exceptional.

"Volunteers are at the heart of table tennis, and The Pride of Table Tennis Awards are a great opportunity for people across the country to recognise volunteers who are having an amazing impact in their local community."



Winners at last year's Pride of Table Tennis Awards ceremony

The shortlisted candidates

Contribution to Table Tennis

Nominees: Brenda Bailey, Barry Hayward

Volunteer of the Year

Nominees: Jane Milward, Trevor Campbell, Malcolm Sealy

Young Volunteer of the Year

Nominees: Declan Garner, Robyn Cosgrove

Club of the Year

Nominees: Torbay Table Tennis Academy, Waterside Table Tennis Club, Bishop Auckland Table Tennis Club

Coach of the Year

Nominees: Roger Chipperfield, Luke Carrington

Technical Official of the Year

Winner: Brian Jackson

Inspirational Story of the Year

Nominees: Jacob Sobel, Charlotte Binley

Inclusivity Award

Nominees: Ken Phillips, Adam Wilson

Partner of the Year

Nominees: Leeds City Council, Carlton le Willows Academy, Bishop Barrington School

They're an inspiration!

Read more about Jacob and Charlotte's amazing stories

Jacob Sobel

Edgware

Nominated by his mum, Debra

Jacob is 13 years old and he absolutely loves table tennis. He trains twice a week, once in Elstree & Borehamwood Table Tennis Club and once with Maccabi TTC. He plays for Maccabi in Division 5 of the Wembley League and for Elstree & Borehamwood in Division 3 in the Barnet League.

In February 2017, he decided he wanted to use his table tennis skills to do something special for people less fortunate than himself.

He set about organising a 10-hour table tennis challenge at home. Friends and family were invited to come and play against Jacob, or get some training from him in booked slots throughout the day.

Everyone who attended was asked to make a donation to Jacob's chosen charity - Chai Cancer Care.

Between 10am and 8pm, he played 22 people and raised nearly £900, only stopping for a bit of lunch and a couple of 10-minute breaks.

The charity were absolutely thrilled and wrote an article about his efforts on their website.

Charlotte Binley

Reading

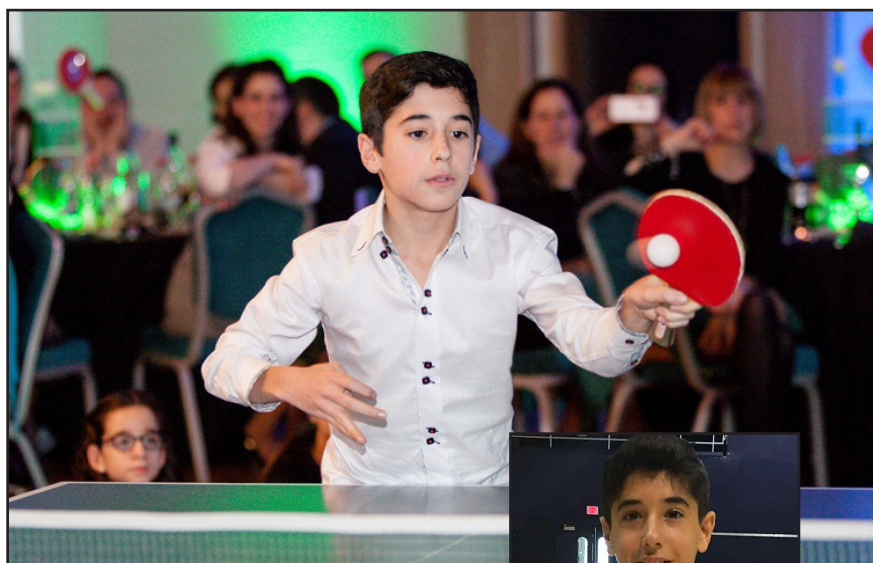
Nominated by Tom Maynard

Charlotte has played table tennis from a young age and competed a lot as a junior. She moved on to Bristol Academy of Sport to join the table tennis academy and study she then went on to study for a degree at Bedford.

When she was just starting out in university life she was diagnosed with a very rare form of blood cancer and had to drop out of university to start treatment and remain in hospital until a suitable bone marrow donor was found as she needed a transplant.

She had to undergo chemotherapy as well as many other unpleasant treatments in order to recover. After months in hospital she was lucky to get the transplant she needed and began her recovery.

During this time she was told about an



event called the British Transplant Games, for people who have had transplants and want to get back into competitive sport. There was a table tennis event, and when she was well enough she decided she wanted to enter.

After a couple of tough years of treatment and recovering she finally did just that in the summer of 2016 in Liverpool and won the gold medal.

This meant she now qualified for the world games in Malaga last summer where she got a silver medal in singles and also silver in women's doubles.

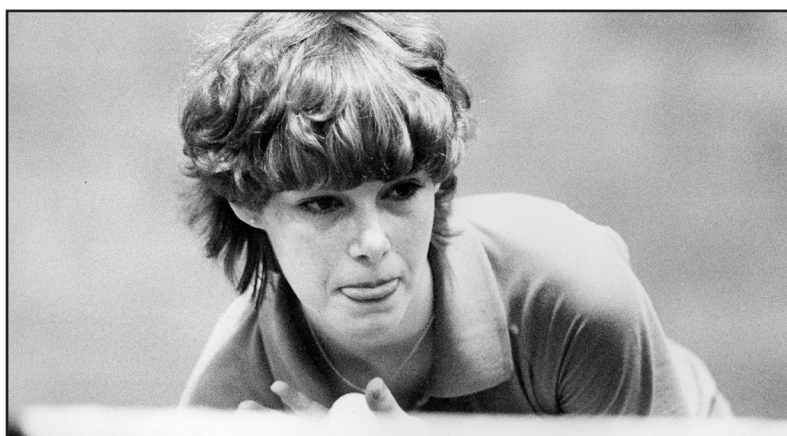
A fantastic achievement for someone who has been suffering such a severe illness.

Record-breakers

Top names prove dedication's what you need



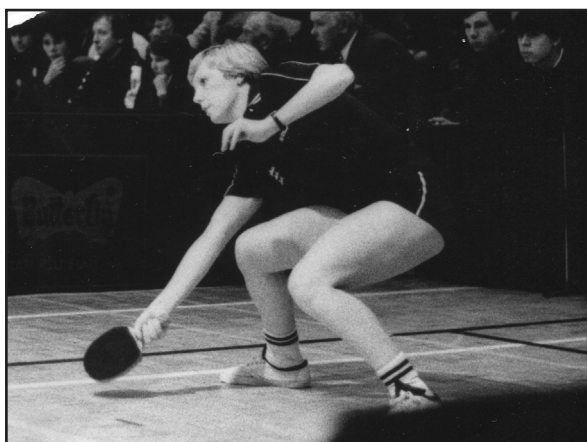
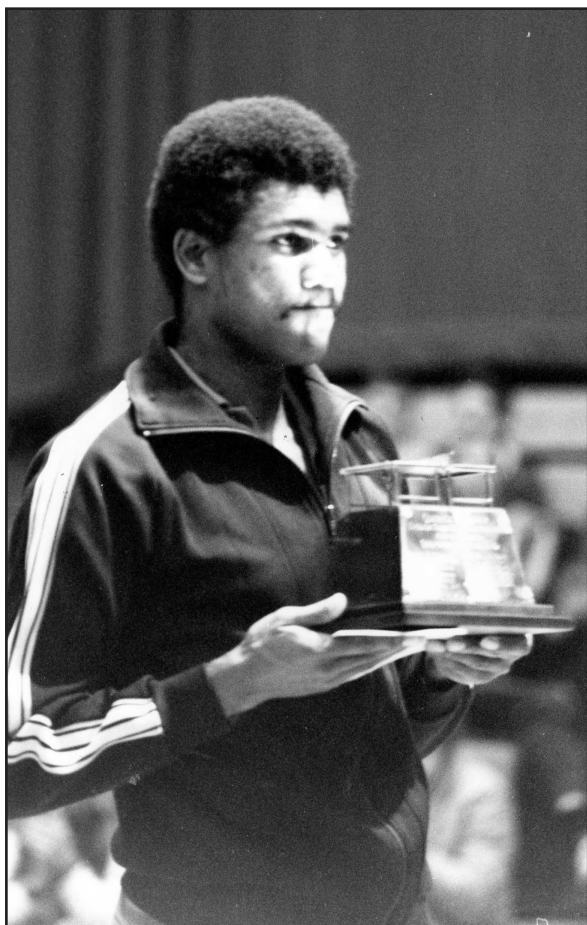
Champions: Paul Beck (right and inset with Mike O'Driscoll) is the oldest to win a title at the Senior Nationals. Below: Lisa Lomas has the most Women's Doubles titles



Statistics only tell part of a story and if you look through the National Championships records then there is a list of winners, runners-up and all those who come behind. However, the Championships are made up of individual stories and records made to be broken.

The statistics show that Desmond Douglas won an incredible 32 Senior National titles, including 11 Men's Singles. His first was in 1976 and the last singles title in 1990 although his Men's Doubles trophies did not run out until 1998 aged 43 years old when he won his 16th title in this event. Second best in the Men's Doubles are Alan Cooke and Paul Drinkhall, both on nine.

Who is the oldest record holder at the National Championships? That accolade probably goes to a jubilant Paul Beck who in 2013, along with Michael O'Driscoll,



Best of the best: Des Douglas (top left) holds the Men's Singles, Men's Doubles and overall title records; Jill Parker (left) is the Women's Singles and joint total record-holder; Emily Bates (above) is the youngest winner of a Senior title

won the Veterans' Men's Doubles when he was 65.

As for the youngest holder of a senior title, that belongs to Emily Bates, aged 14 years, in 2009 who along with Mary Fuller won the Women's Doubles title.

Alex Perry and Skylet Andrew are our champion Mixed Doubles title-holders with eight apiece. On the distaff side, Fiona Elliot (Mommessin) holds a record seven titles.

Lisa Bellinger (Lomas) had nine wins in the Women's Doubles, closely followed by Karenza Mathews (Smith), Jill Hammersley (Parker) and Helen Lower on eight.

Jill also tops the table with the most Women's Singles wins, seven, and equal with Helen Lower for the most total number of titles, which stands at 17.

The record for playing in the most National Championships is unable to be ratified as there are incomplete results for many years. However, there is

a strong possibility that Paul Beck is the player with the longest span. Paul first played in 1967 and his last tournament was in 2015.

Nigel Eckersley is close on his heels, playing in his first National Championships in 1970 and also playing his last in 2015, when he was a bronze medallist.

Paul and Nigel would probably still be challenging for titles if Veterans' events had continued to be part of the Senior Nationals - and it would have been quite something had either brought up a 50-year span at the competition.

• If you have any old programmes or results then I would be delighted to hear from you and can be contacted at DianeK1414@hotmail.co.uk

DIANE WEBB



Clockwise from top: Men's Doubles champions Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford enter the court; Paul and Jo Drinkhall celebrate winning the Mixed Doubles; Denise Payet reached her first senior singles semi-final; Aaron McKibbin and Will Bayley chat behind the scenes; Tin-Tin Ho and Maria Tsaptsinos clinch the Women's Doubles



Last year's championships



RESULTS

Men's Singles: Paul Drinkhall bt Sam Walker 4-2 (9-11, 11-6, 9-11, 11-7, 11-8)

Women's Singles: Tin-Tin Ho bt Kelly Sibley 4-1 (12-10, 6-11, 12-10, 11-5, 11-4)

Men's Doubles: Paul Drinkhall & Liam Pitchford bt Chris Doran & Mike O'Driscoll 3-0 (11-6, 14-12, 12-10)

Women's Doubles: Tin-Tin Ho & Maria Tsapsinos bt Kelly Sibley & Jo Drinkhall 3-0 (11-6, 11-9, 11-8)

Mixed Doubles: Paul & Jo Drinkhall bt Sam Walker & Tin-Tin Ho 3-0 (12-10, 14-12, 11-6)

Under-21 Men's Singles: Tom Jarvis bt Helshan Weerasinghe 4-3 (11-8, 8-11, 12-10, 8-11, 6-11, 11-5, 11-8)

Under-21 Women's Singles: Tin-Tin Ho bt Maria Tsapsinos 4-1 (12-10, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-8)

Other winners

Men's Class 3-5: Jack Hunter-Spivey

Men's Class 6-8: Aaron McKibbin

Men's Class 9-10: Kim Daybell



Clockwise from top: Darcie Proud gets airborne; Tin-Tin Ho receives the Fair Play Award from Diane and Ebby Scholer; Kim Daybell stretches to return against Liam Pitchford; Tom Jarvis receives the Under-21 trophy from Nick Jarvis; Dan Bullen takes on Jack Hunter-Spivey



New England kit deal



The Team World Cup at this venue last week marked the first competition appearance of the new England table tennis kit.

It followed Table Tennis England signing a new four-year agreement with their Official Clothing Supplier, Butterfly.

The deal will see the manufacturer continue to supply bespoke kit for the England Leopards squad.

There are red and black 'home and away' versions of the kit, which also features a new England Table Tennis Team logo designed around the traditional three leopards badge, as well as the logos of Butterfly and Tees Sport, the Butterfly partner for specialist equipment in the British Isles.

Butterfly was keen to extend its relationship with the England team in the wake of the men's squad winning bronze medals at the World Team Championships in Malaysia in 2016.

Taisei Imamura, President of Tamasu Butterfly Europe, said: "We are delighted to continue our long-standing support for Table Tennis England and the English team.

"The new kit that we are supplying takes advantage of the latest materials which are the most comfortable to play in and wear. I wish England every success."

Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe said: "We are proud to have extended our relationship with Butterfly and hope our players can continue to deliver world-class performances while wearing a world-class brand."

As well as the senior squad wearing Butterfly livery, the company will also supply kit to the England Youth Squad and National Centre for Excellence, as well as Table Tennis England staff.

Head of Talent & Performance, Simon Mills, said: "We are continuing to forge a high-quality partnership with Butterfly and I'm



The new England kit (top) on show for the first time at the ITTF Team World Cup. The new deal with Official Clothing Supplier, Butterfly, owes a lot to the England squad winning bronze at the World Team Championships (above)

delighted they will continue to supply bespoke designs to the England team, as well as having expanded their support to include the lower tiers of our pathway."

Since 2015, Butterfly has provided bespoke kit to the England squad. Before that, England wore the same generic kit worn by several other nations, with minimal England branding.

If you want to show your colours and support England, you can buy the new kit from www.teessport.com



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